



NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

Police to be out in force through Memorial Day weekend

'Click It or Ticket' enforcement mobilization aimed at increasing seat belt use day and night

FRANKFORT, Ky. (May 17, 2013) – Motorists who refuse to wear their seat belts – beware. The 2013 national “Click It or Ticket” Memorial Day seat belt enforcement mobilization kicks off May 20 to help save lives by cracking down on those who don’t buckle up.

Despite a wealth of data showing that seat belts save lives – and also despite implementation of a primary seat belt law – Kentucky’s 83 percent seat belt usage rate lags behind the national rate of 86 percent. Therefore, the Kentucky Office of Highway Safety (KOHS) is supporting state and local law enforcement across the country in their efforts to strongly enforce seat belt laws around the clock.

“Kentucky undoubtedly experiences far too many fatalities that could have been avoided with the simple use of a seat belt,” said Transportation Cabinet Secretary Mike Hancock. “Clearly this is an indication that people are not taking the law seriously or they are just not aware of the huge risk taken by not buckling up.”

Kentucky’s roadway fatalities increased last year, going from 721 deaths in 2011 to 746 in 2012. More than half of those killed in motor vehicles were not restrained.

“Too many motorists don’t realize the importance of wearing a seat belt, and are severely injured or killed because of it,” said KOHS Director Bill Bell. “That’s why officers are prepared to ticket anyone not buckled up. No warnings and no excuses.”

The KOHS awarded more than \$96,800 in federal funds to 18 state and local police agencies across the Commonwealth to help bolster seat belt enforcement during the campaign. The funding is provided through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

Although enforcement officers will be active during the campaign, Bell emphasized, “The Click It or Ticket campaign is not about writing tickets. It’s about awareness and saving lives.”

According to NHTSA, seat belts, when worn correctly, reduce the risk of fatal injury to front-seat occupants by 45 percent – and by 60 percent in pickup trucks, SUVs and minivans.

While this year's Click It or Ticket enforcement mobilization runs from May 20 through June 2, motorists should know that officers are out enforcing seat belt laws year-round.

“Motorists should buckle up every time they go out, both day and night,” said Bell.

For more on the national Click It or Ticket mobilization, visit nhtsa.gov/ciot.

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